

Wescott Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109837
Local Authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	337382
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Ken Bush

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Wyatt
Headteacher	Miss S Hunter
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed eight lessons taught by eight teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, including the headteacher, subject coordinators and members of the governing body, including its chair. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at planning documentation, assessment information, examples of pupils' work and a number of policy documents. The team received and considered 71 questionnaires from parents and carers and 14 from school staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The progress made to date in improving attainment and progress in writing.
- Whether or not the achievement of boys differs significantly from girls over time and whether learning is managed effectively to ensure that both boys and girls can achieve equally well.
- How successfully the school has addressed the issues in teaching identified as requiring improvement at the previous inspection.
- The contribution made to effective leadership and management by leaders at all levels in the school.

Information about the school

Wescott is an average sized infant school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and only a small number speak English as an additional language. The school has an autism resource base, known as 'Little Acorns'. Since the admissions criteria for the base require a statement of special educational needs, the proportion of pupils in the school as a whole with such a statement is well above average. However, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities overall is lower than average. Other than those related to autism, these pupils' needs are related mainly to moderate learning and behavioural and emotional difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in two Reception classes. Pupils begin school either in September or January of the academic year so the time different pupils spend in Reception varies considerably. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools and Artsmark status in recent years. The headteacher has been in post since September 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Wescott Infant School provides its pupils with an outstanding education, a view which is endorsed almost unanimously by parents and carers. Under the exceptional leadership of the headteacher, a highly effective staff team has been developed with consistently high expectations of all pupils. As a result of excellent provision, pupils flourish and quickly develop the skills to succeed and a passion for learning. Self-evaluation and monitoring procedures are firmly established, and are clearly understood and well used by staff. These comprehensive quality assurance systems enable timely and accurate information about pupils' progress and other aspects of the school's work to be used effectively. Leaders at all levels, including those with responsibility for subjects and the school's autism resource base, make an excellent contribution to school improvement. The school's strong track record of excellent outcomes for pupils over time and the significant progress made since the previous inspection, especially in the quality of teaching, give the school outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

From broadly average starting points, children get off to a strong start at Wescott, making good and rapidly improving progress before they commence Year 1. Provision for children in the Reception classes is good. As a result, they soon develop confidence and take secure early steps in developing basic skills. There is a broad range of activities on offer to children although on a few occasions, child-initiated activities are not matched closely enough to children's different needs and abilities. Consistently good or better teaching and an innovative and stimulating curriculum enable pupils' progress to accelerate during Key Stage 1 so they reach high levels of attainment by the time they leave to go to junior school. Progress in writing has been slower than in reading and mathematics in the recent past, but as a consequence of well-focused and consistently applied strategies, including increasing opportunities for extended writing, clear and rapid improvement is now evident and attainment in writing is rising.

Outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils and their families are key factors in the school's success and contribute strongly to exceptional personal development. Pupils feel exceptionally safe and considering their age, have extensive knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Children in the school, including the very youngest, behave extremely well. They enjoy each other's company and are routinely polite and considerate towards one another. Pupils' positive views of, and pride in, their school are reflected in high rates of attendance and excellent punctuality. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning at junior school both academically, through their proficiency in literacy, numeracy and, increasingly, in information and communication technology (ICT), and socially.

The governing body makes a notable contribution to the day-to-day running of the school and is becoming increasingly strategic and proactive in its approach. It has ensured that

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the school has made a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion which has benefited both pupils and the wider community. However, it has yet to fully implement an evaluation of its various plans and activities to guide future developments.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To ensure that child-initiated activities in the Reception classes are more closely matched to children's needs and abilities in order to accelerate progress.
- To develop more fully the evaluation of its contribution to the promotion of community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils at Wescott enjoy school greatly and are extremely enthusiastic about all aspects of their learning. For such young children, they have excellent levels of concentration and are able to apply themselves well in demanding tasks for sustained periods of time. In two linked Year 1 literacy lessons seen on consecutive days during the inspection, pupils maintained great engagement in their learning as they recounted their participation in the dress rehearsal for the Christmas concert. Using photographs to guide them, they were able to construct an accurate account of a memorable event and make effective use of 'time words', such as 'first', 'next' and 'finally'. These well-planned lessons, which are typical of those seen during the inspection, enabled pupils of different abilities to make equally good progress, both in their speaking and listening and in their writing skills.

The progress made by all groups of pupils, including the more able, is outstanding. As a result of excellent support and well-targeted interventions, the attainment and progress made by the relatively small proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is closely in line with that of their peers in the school and better than comparable pupils nationally. Pupils with autism make excellent progress and are able to work for lengthy periods in mainstream classes with no apparent difficulty. Although there are small fluctuations year on year and in different subjects, boys and girls attain and make progress at a comparable rate over time because lessons are sufficiently well planned to ensure that both can succeed equally well.

Pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding of what it means to eat healthily and they participate enthusiastically in the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities which are much enjoyed by pupils; this is reflected in Wescott's Healthy School's status. The school council offers the chance for a good number of pupils to exercise leadership roles within the school community and pupils also actively support charities such as Children in Need, Red Nose Day and the Feed the Children appeal. Examples of contributing to the local community are less common, but are developing. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is clearly evident in lessons, assemblies and through the mature way in which they relate to, and communicate with, other children and with adults, including visitors to the school. For their age, they have a very clear appreciation of religious and cultural diversity both in the United Kingdom and in other countries.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Pupils make rapid and sustained progress at Wescott because the quality of teaching is of a consistently high standard. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge is used to great effect to plan stimulating and engaging lessons which effectively provide ample active learning opportunities for all pupils. Staff take a flexible approach both to planning and to lesson delivery enabling a high degree of specialist teaching for an infant school setting. Resources, including the ICT 'Fizzbooks', are used well to promote both independent and collaborative work. Assessment information is used consistently well to ensure that tasks are well matched to pupils' aptitudes and abilities. Pupils' work is regularly and thoroughly marked and pupils are given excellent feedback both in books and orally during lessons. Consequently, pupils routinely know their personal targets and what they need to do to improve their work.

The well-constructed and imaginative curriculum makes a strong contribution to outstanding outcomes for both boys and girls. There is an excellent balance between the provision of high quality activities to promote and develop literacy and numeracy skills with imaginative activities to stimulate artistic, creative and physical development. Intervention programmes for pupils who find some aspects of learning difficult, such as Max's Marvellous Maths, are a good example of this successful balance. The well-established thematic approach enables pupils to readily make links between different subjects. The curriculum is flexible, continuously under review and benefits from the

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school's excellent links with other schools and partnership organisations, especially in music and the arts, as reflected in Wescott's Artsmark status. There are numerous trips and visits, and out-of-school-hours provision is wide-ranging and of excellent quality. Well-attended sessions on cheerleading and gymnastics are examples of this provision seen during the inspection.

Well-deployed and highly skilled teaching assistants and the strong teamwork established between them and class teachers are key features of the school's outstanding care, guidance and support. There are well-established and consistently applied systems in place to ensure effective exchange of information with external agencies. Support for pupils whose circumstances render them vulnerable and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with autism, is exemplary. Consequently, these pupils thrive, make excellent progress and are able to take full advantage of all the school has to offer. One parent remarked: 'The members of the Little Acorns team have made a huge difference to my son's experience of school. Their work has given him the best possible start to his education.' Transition arrangements between key stages, including with the partner junior school, are excellent and are also very highly regarded by parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and all staff, has developed a clear vision, encapsulated in the phrase 'Anything is Possible', which has been successfully translated into an excellent strategic plan. The school's effective approach to setting challenging but realistic targets for all pupils and to developing significant leadership capacity at all levels has enabled it to improve rapidly in the past few years. Morale within the whole staff body, including support staff, as reflected in responses to inspection questionnaires, is exceptionally high. Innovative systems to engage parents and carers in the life of the school, such as sending the weekly newsletter electronically, and the hosting of parent/carer information evenings, have led to extremely high levels of parental support for the school and it is very highly regarded in the local community.

The governing body discharges its responsibilities to good effect. Good use is made of governors' professional expertise outside of education to challenge and support school leaders and provide appropriate strategic leadership, such as in the lead they took to develop the school's ICT infrastructure. Equality of opportunity is vigorously and successfully promoted and is reflected in the outstanding achievement of all groups of pupils. The school is welcoming and inclusive and instances of discrimination are

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extremely rare. Procedures for ensuring the effectiveness of safeguarding, including risk assessments, are exemplary and comprehensively understood by all staff. Clear and robust arrangements are securely in place for monitoring how well policy is translated into practice. The strengthening partnerships between the school and groups within Wokingham, as seen in events such as the school's participation in the town council's gardening competition, provide evidence of the school's good contribution to community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the Reception classes with broadly average starting points in terms of prior attainment, although there is a significant range within that. Good early adult intervention and support enable children to quickly learn the routines needed for good learning and effective social development. Consequently, children make good or better progress by the time they start Key Stage 1. The variability in progress of different children is largely a reflection of the length of time they have been in the Reception class, with those who have been there for a full year making the most rapid progress. Children develop very positive attitudes to learning, are very well behaved and cooperate well with their classmates and with adults.

Staff generally make effective use of the good learning and play facilities both indoors and outside, and there is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. During the inspection, some children were observed collaboratively investigating the movement of water as it passed through a water-wheel, while others were discussing aspects of Christmas with a teacher. However, the good and improving quality of information that is gathered about children's progress is not always used as well as it might be to tailor activities to suit the needs of individual children, notably when activities are child initiated.

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Good leadership and management ensure that the safety and welfare of children are paramount. Personal contact with parents and carers is maintained on a daily basis, which enables any emerging issues or concerns to be dealt with efficiently. Consequently, parents and carers express a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of care and education provided.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the parental questionnaire was well above that typically found in similar schools. Almost all parents and carers expressed their approval of the way that the headteacher, staff and the governing body are seeking to move the school forward. Parents and carers view the school's engagement with them as a key strength. One parent/carer commented: 'The school provides a positive learning experience for our child and gives outstanding information about what each child will and could learn. We have been given many chances to extend and build upon class learning through information sessions and open dialogue.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wescott Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 141 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	75	17	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	59	83	11	15	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	51	30	42	3	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	54	28	39	2	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	38	54	30	42	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	65	21	30	2	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	59	28	39	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	36	51	27	38	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	51	30	42	2	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	44	32	45	0	0	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	39	35	49	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	63	24	34	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	72	17	24	1	1	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wescott Infant School, Wokingham, RG40 2EN

Thank you very much for welcoming us so warmly to your school. We have judged that Wescott is an outstanding school and it is clear to us why you are all so proud to go to it. You told us that you feel very safe in school and you know a lot already about how to keep yourself safe out of school as well, including when you use the internet. This shows us, too, that the teachers and other adults who work at your school care about you and support you very well. You behave exceptionally well and show that you care about your classmates and other people outside of the school. We are also very impressed with how much you know about eating healthy foods and taking lots of exercise.

You make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics because the lessons which your teachers and other staff provide are always at least good and are usually outstanding. Teachers also mark your work very carefully and give you useful targets so that you all know what to do to improve it. You have very exciting and varied activities arranged for you which are a good mixture of things which teachers ask you to do, and things you can choose to do for yourself. Your headteacher and all the other adults, including the governors, lead the school extremely well.

Since you go to an outstanding school, there are only two things which we have asked your headteacher and the governors to do to make it even better. These are to:

- make sure that in the Reception classes, the activities chosen by children match what they can do a little more closely
- think more about how well the different activities that the school does with the local community have gone to help to plan the next ones better.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We know that your teachers and other staff make your school a very special place for you. You can do your bit by continuing to do your best in your learning.

Yours sincerely

Ken Bush

Lead inspector

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